

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent application of:

Brian E. Lemoff et al.

Serial No.: 09/873,127

Filed: June 1, 2001

For: *Non-Blocking Mechanical Fiber
Optic Matrix Switch*

Examiner: Sung H. Pak

Group Art Unit: 2874

Confirmation: 3243

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

BOX AMENDMENT - NO FEE
Honorable Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the final Office Action mailed June 26, 2003, please reconsider the patentability of the pending claims in light of the following remarks.

The obviousness rejections of Claims 1-2, 4-5, 8, 11-12 and 16-18 are respectfully traversed. The examiner's position is that it would have been obvious to modify Kobayashi et al. to have collimating lenses as allegedly taught by '034 Mock. However, this proposed modification defeats the fundamental design of the Kobayashi et al. switch which depends upon pulley mechanisms 17 and 27 to insert and withdraw ferrules 12 and 22 on the optical fibers of groups 10 and 20, respectively, relative to sleeves 3 in change connection board 1. The lenses 26 of '034 Mock collimate light from input fibers 27 and carry it a substantial longitudinal distance through free space to photo detectors 34. The Kobayashi et al. switch depends on close-proximity Z-axis movement and mating of the input and output fiber ends and has no need for the lenses 26 of '034 Mock. Independent Claims 1 and 11 do not require any Z-axis motion of the optical fibers and, therefore, advantageously employ the recited collimating lenses and collimating steps. There is no express or implied suggestion in Kobayashi et al. or '034 Mock to modify the Kobayashi et al. switch as proposed by the

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Request for Reconsideration

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examiner. Accordingly, withdrawal of the obviousness rejections of Claims 1 and 11, and Claims 2, 4-5, 8, 12 and 16-18 which depend therefrom, is requested.

The obviousness rejections of Claims 20 and 26-28 are also respectfully traversed. The examiner's position is that it would have been obvious in light of '982 Takahashi to modify the Kobayashi et al. switch "to have a mechanism that moves fiber ferrules relative to the switching stage." The '982 Takahashi switch has a single unnumbered input optical fiber with a ferrule 29 that can be moved along X and Y axes and inserted along the Z-axis via latching solenoid 37 into a selected one of a plurality of line-up sleeves 12. An array of output optical fibers 14 have their ferrules 13 permanently inserted in the other sides of the line-up sleeves 12. The examiner's proposed modification of the Kobayashi et al. switch would require elimination of the pulley move mechanisms 17 and 27 and the mounting of the large Z-axis ferrule moving mechanisms of '982 Takahashi on the ferrule drive wires 16 and 27 of Kobayashi et al. There is no express or implied motivation in either Kobayashi et al. or '982 Takahashi for such a modification. Moreover, such a modification would not have had a reasonable chance of success since it would be difficult to stabilize and align the Z-axis ferrule moving mechanism of '982 Takahashi on the ferrule drive wires 16 and 27 of Kobayashi et al. Accordingly, withdrawal of the obviousness rejection of Claim 20, along with Claims 26-28 which depend therefrom, is requested.

This case is in condition for allowance and notification to this effect is solicited. No additional fee is due at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael H. Jester 8/26/03

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to: USPTO

Examiner Sung H. Pak

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from: Michael H. Jester

date: August 26, 2003

subject: US Pat. Appl. SN 09/873,127

Lenoff et al.

pages: four(4) (including this page)

NOTES:

Response to Final Rejection
Transmitted herewith.

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